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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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I *To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color;*

II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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Man verily is formed of desire; and whatever work he does, in the likeness of it he grows.
—*Brihad Upanishad*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 54 NOVEMBER, 1965 NUMBER 1

THE REACH OF HUMAN GROWTH

THE human being accommodates without difficulty to the cycles of physical existence. He knows what they are, their turnings, and adjusts to their inevitable effects. In this sense, they no longer affect his real life at all.

Not so the psychological cycles, or, as we might say, the *karmic* cycles. These influence another aspect of man's being—the area of decision and growth. If we could be as much at home with these inner cycles as we are with those affecting the physical body and the external environment, we would be philosophers indeed!

We think of the ordeal of human development as a great struggle, made up of hard choices, severe self-denials, and stern self-control. No doubt it is all these things. But it is also a path of transforming discovery. Only the personal man suffers such feelings of restriction. And with the awakening to self-knowledge, the individuality, the true man, comes into his own.

Of great assistance on this path is the activity of study. Study, it might be said, is the means by which we learn how to make objective what was once inward and mysterious. When influences, causes, pressures which have been shaping our actions are made to stand apart from the observing intelligence, they lose their power to control. Like Krishna, we are born through our own *maya,* although with us it is no deliberate thing. When maya is seen for what it is, the will replaces it as the cause of human action, and to that degree the individual becomes free.

Study is the process of objectivization of causes which are not the immediate expression of will or human intention—which are really only effects. "It is impossible," says H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 45), "to conceive of anything without a cause; the attempt to do so makes the mind a blank." And then she adds: "This is virtually the condition to which the mind must come at last when we try to trace back the chain of causes and effects, but both science and religion jump to this condition of blankness much more quickly than is necessary; for they ignore the metaphysical abstractions which are the only conceivable cause of physical concretions." In these words we have explained to us the importance of the study of the teachings of the Secret Doctrine. By becoming familiar with these metaphysical abstractions, we accomplish two things: (1) we become able to *conceive* of our own beinghood as an expression of reality above and beyond the power of these abstractions—which means that we can entertain the possibility of self-knowledge which is independent of the processes they represent; and (2) we learn to objectify, and thereby to understand the working of, a great range of the phenomena of the not-self—which make up in their entirety the world in which we live.

On this basis, study is the entry, the vestibule, of the place of initiation. For whatever words we use, the meaning of initiation comes to this—that it represents a freedom which was not possible before. To know (the self, the law) is to be free.

Study brings continuous increments of understanding. Reading the books and letting the mind work with and apply whatever is understood are exercises that give skill as the years go by. *Thinking* is a discipline, but it is less onerous, less burdensome, than any other of the skills man may acquire. It is the natural work of the embodied consciousness, although to feel the truth of this requires practice.

Thinking is different from the acquirement of facts. It is the redirection of what the therapist calls the "free association" process to its original function, the "self-reproductive power of thought." The mind flows from initial idea to analogue, and when the habit of synthesis is gained, the play of thought with analogy results in explanation of things not previously understood. Meanwhile the metaphysical rules of the fundamental propositions of the Secret Doctrine guide the course of thinking to impartial conclusions, pushing aside personal eccentricities and psychic attractions. In time one gains confidence in the integrity of his own thought processes, and he soon

realizes that there is nothing personal at all in the achievement. When he looks at his own thought and its fruit, he recognizes a natural principle at work; that this occurs within himself is but a detail. He knows, moreover, that "a sense of pride would mar the work." He knows this from seeing it happen in himself. Vanity in thinking is like spoiling a work of art. The vision is dragged down to some personal confinement, becoming petty and small.

Such discoveries are seen as instances of the law of progress for human beings. They make the experiences of psychological and karmic cycles objective to the one who goes through them. In time, he then gains that equanimity which belongs to the sage—or, at least, that forerunning persistence and balance which support him while he is becoming a sage. It all begins with study.

H. P. Blavatsky put it thus:

> The evolution of the GOD-IDEA proceeds apace with man's own intellectual evolution. So true it is that the noblest ideal to which the religious Spirit of one age can soar, will appear as a gross caricature to the philosophic mind in a succeeding epoch! The philosophers themselves had to be *initiated into perceptive mysteries,* before they could grasp the correct idea of the ancients in relation to this most metaphysical subject. (*S.D.* I, 326.)

The import of this passage is that initiation is a means of breaking out of the limitations of time and circumstance in one's thinking. It is the way, therefore, of becoming free of cycles, which can only result from understanding both the limitations and the purpose of the cyclic processes.

But how, one may ask, can a man become free of what he is deeply involved in? This is the basic inquiry. It is related to the reason why the *Bhagavad-Gita* has a great battlefield as its setting. The law of the external universe (maya), against which is ranged the liberation of the initiate, is stated as follows:

> Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya. (*S.D.* I, 40.)

> That Ego, progressing in an arc of ascending subjectivity, must exhaust the experience of every plane. (*S.D.* I, 330.)

By study, one learns the importance of remaining *himself,* while "belonging" to the plane to which his karma has brought him. He can exhaust the experience to be had there only by becoming independent of it. The soul is initiated *into* truth, but at the same time *out* of the illusions of any particularized form of consciousness. By study, he comes to recognize that this is the eternal process of life, and he is finally convinced in his heart of hearts that there are no short-term goals for the spirit in man. Only then can he begin to do well his work as a human being *within* the cycle.

The idea of the endless reach of human possibility is a truism on everyone's lips, these days. Its spirit is excellent, but its meaning cannot be grasped without *knowledge*—or, at least, metaphysical teaching which gives insight into how much "human possibility" involves. The finite achievements of the cycles cannot be completed by human beings except in the light of the infinite possibilities which lie beyond.

PROSPECTS BEYOND TIME

Our lives are part of the universe and will last as long, but before we can attain to that final harmony between the universe and ourselves, to which we look forward as the consummation of existence, how much we have to learn about both! In respect of our true natures, of what in truth we are and are capable of becoming, to what heights in knowledge, wisdom, power, the soul can climb, of all this science and philosophy have so far hardly yet spoken. Nor can any boundary be set, any "Thus far and no further" to the expansion of the mind. In our present life we have acquired at the most the alphabet of this knowledge; and as for the universe, of the modes of existence and happiness of which it permits, of its possibilities as an abode for progressive beings like ourselves, we know less than nothing, and no single life could teach us what they may be.

—W. MACNEILE DIXON

HERETICS AND THE RENAISSANCE

X—In the Light of Theosophy

IGNORANCE was enthroned as the mother of devotion [in the middle ages]. Learning was denounced, and savants prosecuted the sciences in peril of their lives. They were compelled to employ a jargon to conceal their ideas from all but their own adepts, and to accept opprobrium, calumny, and poverty. The votaries of the ancient worship were persecuted and put to death on charges of witchcraft. The Albigenses, descendants of the Gnostics, and the Waldenses, precursors of the Protestants, were hunted and massacred under like accusations. Martin Luther himself was accused of companionship with Satan in proper person. The whole Protestant world still lies under the same imputation. There is no distinction in the judgments of the Church between dissent, heresy, and witchcraft. And except where civil authority protects, they are alike capital offences. Religious liberty the Church regards as intolerance. But the reformers were nursed with the milk of their mothers. Luther was as bloodthirsty as the Pope; Calvin more intolerant than Leo or Urban. (*Isis* II, 502-3.)

"Ecclesia non novit Sanguinem!" meekly repeated the scarlet-robed cardinals. And to avoid the spilling of blood which horrified them, they instituted the Holy Inquisition. This immortal institution of Christianity did not remain without its Dante to sing its praise. "Macedo, a Portuguese Jesuit," says the author of *Demonologia,* "has discovered the origin of the Inquisition, in the terrestrial Paradise, and presumes to allege that God was the first who began the functions of an inquisitor over Cain and the workmen of Babel!" (*Isis* II, 58-59.)

Since the burning of the last witch, the great Revolution of France, so elaborately prepared by the league of the secret societies and their clever emissaries, had blown over Europe and awakened terror in the bosom of the clergy. It had, like a destroying hurricane, swept away in its course those best allies of the Church, the Roman Catholic aristocracy. A sure foundation was now laid for the right of individual

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NOTE.—This concluding article of the series is entirely from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky.

opinion. The world was freed from ecclesiastical tyranny by opening an unobstructed path to Napoleon the Great, who had given the deathblow to the Inquisition. This great slaughter-house of the Christian Church—wherein she butchered, in the name of the Lamb, all the sheep arbitrarily declared scurvy—was in ruins, and she found herself left to her own responsibility and resources. (*Isis* II, 22.)

There has never been a religion in the annals of the world with such a bloody record as Christianity. . . . The cruel, crafty politician, the plotting monk, glorified by ecclesiastical history with the aureole of a martyred saint. The despoiled philosophers, the Neo-Platonists, and the Gnostics, daily anathematized by the Church all over the world for long and dreary centuries. The curse of the unconcerned Deity hourly invoked on the magian rites and theurgic practice, and the Christian clergy themselves using *sorcery* for ages. Hypatia, the glorious maiden-philosopher, torn to pieces by the Christian mob. And such as Catherine de Medici, Lucrezia Borgia, Joanna of Naples, and the Isabellas of Spain, presented to the world as the faithful daughters of the Church—some even decorated by the Pope with the order of the "Immaculate Rose," the highest emblem of womanly purity and virtue, a symbol sacred to the Virgin-mother of God! Such are the examples of human justice! (*Isis* II, 53-54.)

It is generally held by all the symbolic writers that the Ophites were found guilty of practicing the most licentious rites during their religious meetings. The same accusation was brought against the Manichaeans, the Carpocratians, the Paulicians, the Albigenses—in short, against every Gnostic sect which had the temerity to claim the right to think for itself. (*Isis* II, 325.) We would remind Roman Catholic writers of certain *bas-reliefs* on the doors of St. Peter's Cathedral. They are as brazen-faced as the door itself; but less so than any author, who, knowing all this, feigns to ignore historical facts. A long succession of Popes have reposed their pastoral eyes upon these brazen pictures of the vilest obscenity, through those many centuries, without ever finding the slightest necessity for removing them. Quite to the contrary; for we might name certain Popes and Cardinals who made it a life-long study to copy these heathen suggestions of "nature-gods." (*Isis* II, 332.) Luther speaks of a fish-pond at Rome, situated near a convent of nuns, which, having been cleared out by order of Pope Gregory, disclosed, at the bottom, over six thousand infant skulls; and of a nunnery at Neinburg, in Austria,

whose foundations, when searched, disclosed the same relics of celibacy and chastity! (*Isis* II, 58.)

If we at times speak bitterly of popular modern Christianity, it is because we know that with all its other ennobling and saving tendencies it leads to the destruction of myriads of souls. For it leads to the belief that it signifies little what a man does, if he only finally believes that his sins are forgiven him, and that by relying on the merits of Jesus Christ he may escape the vengeance of the Lord. (THEOSOPHY 48:492.) Belief in the Bible *literally,* and in a *carnalized* Christ, will not last a quarter of a century longer. The Churches will have to part with their cherished dogmas, or the 20th century will witness the downfall and ruin of all Christendom, and with it, belief even in a Christis, as pure spirit. The very name has now become obnoxious, and theological Christianity must die out, *never to resurrect* again in its present form. This, in itself, would be the happiest solution of all, were there no danger from the natural reaction which is sure to follow: crass materialism will be the consequence and the result of centuries of blind faith, unless the loss of old ideals is replaced by other ideals, unassailable, because *universal,* and built on the rock of eternal truths instead of the shifting sands of human fancy. (THEOSOPHY 4:135.)

The Roman Catholic Church has two far mighter enemies than the "heretics" and the "infidels"; and these are—Comparative Mythology and Philology. A conclusive opinion is furnished by too many scholars to doubt the fact that India was the *Alma-Mater,* not only of the civilization, arts, sciences, but also of all the great religions of antiquity; Judaism, and hence Christianity, included. (*Isis* II, 30.) No man, once he devotes himself to [such] comparative studies, can regard the religion of the West in any light but that of a pale and enfeebled copy of older and nobler philosophies. (THEOSOPHY 4:136-7.)

The origin of all religions—Judæo-Christianity included—is to be found in a few primeval truths, not one of which can be explained apart from all the others, as each is a complement of the rest in some one detail. And they are all, more or less, broken rays of the same Sun of truth, and their beginnings have to be sought in the archaic records of the Wisdom-religion. There *was* a universal mystery-language, in which all the World Scriptures were written, from the *Vedas* to "Revelation," from the "Book of the Dead" to the *Acts.* (THEOSOPHY 4: 37.)

The first difficulty for the aspirant lies in the utter impossibility of his comprehending the meaning of the best books written by Hermetic philosophers. These, who mainly live in the mediæval ages, prompted on the one hand by their duty towards their brethren, and by their desire to impart only to them and their successors the glorious truths, and on the other very naturally desirous to avoid the clutches of the bloodthirsty Christian Inquisition, enveloped themselves more than ever in mystery. They invented new signs and hieroglyphs, renovated the ancient symbolic language of the high priests of antiquity, who had used it as a sacred barrier between their holy rites and the ignorance of the profane, and created a veritable Kabalistic slang. This latter, which continually blinded the false neophyte, attracted towards the science only by his greediness for wealth and power which he would have surely misused were he to succeed, is a living, eloquent, clear language, but it is and can become such only to the true disciple of Hermes. (*Modern Panarion,* p. 53.) While many of the mediæval Hermetists were profoundly religious men, they were, in their innermost hearts—like kabalists of every age—the deadliest enemies of the clergy. (*Isis* II, 500.)

The greatest teachers of divinity agree that nearly all ancient books were written symbolically and in a language intelligible only to the initiated. The biographical sketch of Apollonius of Tyana affords an example. As every Kabalist knows, it embraces the whole of the Hermetic philosophy, being a counterpart in many respects of the traditions left us by King Solomon. It reads like a fairy story, but, as in the case of the latter, sometimes, facts and historical events are presented to the world under the colors of a fiction. The journey to India represents allegorically the trials of a neophyte. His long discourses with the Brahmans, their sage advice, and the dialogues with the Corinthian Menippus would, if interpreted, give the esoteric catechism. His visit to the empire of the wise men, and interview with their king Hiarchas, the oracle of Amphiaraüs, explain symbolically many of the secret dogmas of Hermes. They would disclose, if understood, some of the most important secrets of nature. (*Isis* I, 19.)

Every symbol—in *every* national religion—may be read esoterically, and the proof furnished for its being correctly read by transliterating it into its corresponding numerals and geometrical forms—by the extraordinary agreement of all—however much the glyphs and symbols may vary among themselves. For in their origin

those symbols were all identical. (*S.D.* I, 443.) Judaism, earlier and later Gnosticism, Christianity, and even Christian Masonry, have all been erected upon identical cosmical myths, symbols, and allegories, whose full comprehension is possible only to those who have inherited the key from their inventors. (*Isis* II, 405.)

If the voice of the MYSTERIES has become silent for many ages in the West, if Eleusis, Memphis, Antium, Delphi, and Cresa have long ago been made the tombs of a Science once as colossal in the West as it is yet in the East, there are successors now being prepared for them. We are in 1887 and the nineteenth century is close to its death. The twentieth century has strange developments in store for humanity, and may even be the last of its name. (THEOSOPHY 4:73.)

Thus Magic exists, and has existed, ever since prehistoric ages. Beginning in history with the Samothracian Mysteries, it followed its course uninterruptedly, and ended for a time with the expiring theurgic rites and ceremonies of Christianized Greece; then reappeared for a time again with the Neo-Platonic, Alexandrian school, and, passing by initiation to sundry solitary students and philosophers, safely crossed the mediæval ages, and notwithstanding the furious persecutions of the Church, resumed its fame in the hands of such Adepts as Paracelsus and several others, and finally died out in Europe with the Count St. Germain and Cagliostro, to seek refuge from frozen-hearted scepticism in its native country of the East. (*Modern Panarion,* p. 61.)

It is nineteen centuries since, as we are told, the night of Heathenism and Paganism was first dispelled by the divine light of Christianity; and two-and-a-half centuries since the bright lamp of Modern Science began to shine on the darkness of the ignorance of the ages. Within these respective epochs, we are required to believe, the true moral and intellectual progress of the race has occurred. The ancient philosophers were well enough for their respective generations, but they were illiterate as compared with modern men of science. The ethics of Paganism perhaps met the wants of the uncultivated people of antiquity, but not until the advent of the luminous "Star of Bethlehem," was the true road to moral perfection and the way to salvation made plain. Of old, brutishness was the rule, virtue and spirituality the exception. Now, the dullest may read the will of God in His revealed word; men have every incentive to be good, and are constantly becoming better. (*Isis* I, ix.)

This is the assumption; what are the facts? On the one hand an

unspiritual, dogmatic, too often debauched clergy; a host of sects, and three warring great religions; discord instead of union, dogmas without proofs, sensation-loving preachers, and wealth and pleasure-seeking parishioners' hypocrisy and bigotry, begotten by the tyrannical exigencies of respectability, the rule of the day, sincerity and real piety exceptional. On the other hand, scientific hypotheses built on sand; no accord upon a single question, rancorous quarrels and jealousy; a general drift into materialism. A death grapple of Science with Theology for infallibility—"a conflict of ages." (*Ibid.*)

Sickly and deformed child as it now is, the materialism of To-Day is born of the brutal Yesterday. Unless its growth is arrested, it may become our master. It is the bastard progeny of the French Revolution and its reaction against ages of religious bigotry and repression. To prevent the crushing of spiritual aspirations, and the deadening of that intuition which teaches us of a God and a hereafter, we must show our false theologies in their naked deformity, and distinguish between living religion and human dogmas. Our voice is raised for spiritual freedom, and our plea made for enfranchisement from all tyranny, whether of SCIENCE or THEOLOGY. (Isis I, xlv.) The drift of modern thought is palpably in the direction of liberalism in religion as well as science. Centuries of subjection have not quite congealed the life-blood of men into crystals around the nucleus of blind faith; and the nineteenth is witnessing the struggles of the giant as he shakes off the Liliputian cordage and rises to his feet. The day of domineering over men with dogmas has reached its gloaming. Our work, then, is a plea for the recognition of the Hermetic philosophy, the anciently universal Wisdom Religion, as the only possible key to the Absolute in science and theology (*Isis* I, vii.)

FROM THE BEGINNING OF TIME THERE WAS BUT ONE POSITIVE SCIENCE—OCCULTISM; IT WAS THE MYSTERIOUS LEVER OF ALL INTELLECTUAL FORCES. (*Modern Panarion,* p. 51.)

* * *

Sources used in this installment: *Isis Unveiled;* "Fragments of Occult Truth," reprinted in THEOSOPHY, Vol. 48; "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels," reprinted in THEOSOPHY, Vol. 4; "The Search after Occultism," and "The Science of Magic," reprinted in *A Modern Panarion;* and *The Secret Doctrine.*

CREMATION AND RESURRECTION

An offering made by fire unto the Lord.
—Exodus 29: 18

EVER since the seventies of last century, when the body of a prominent Theosophist was willed to the Theosophical Society with instructions that it be cremated for the purpose of illustrating the ancient oriental ideas concerning death and immortality—thus becoming the first such event in the United States—*cremation,* as a method of disposing of the remains of the deceased, has been gaining in popularity with each succeeding year. And now, with the population explosion pushing the limits of our cities far beyond the range of easy access, and burial plots becoming more and more difficult to obtain, the practice seems destined to become even more pronounced. But what are the advantages of cremation, if any, and what the disadvantages? Is it true, as feared by some sincere religious people, that cremation endangers the promise of resurrection? Is it heartless, as a number of faint-hearted sentimentalists have charged, to consign the worn-out bodies of our loved ones to the flames? What are the sanitary values of cremation as compared with interment, especially in their effects upon the health and well-being of the living?

Sentimentally, it would probably be impossible to invent a method of disposal that would leave the faint-hearted totally unmoved. For whether we bury our dead, as is the custom of the Jews, Christians, and some Chinese; cremate, as do most of the oriental religions; or follow the practice of the Zoroastrians, who hoist the unclothed corpse to the top of a funeral tower where flocks of ravening vultures come and reduce the body in minutes to a skeleton, disposal of the remains of the deceased is not one of the pleasantries of life. But the laws and necessities of Nature, which are always beneficent in their operations, take little account, fortunately, of sentiment—and the wise, seeking to understand the problems of the matter, will wish to know the advantages of cremation over other methods, if such advantages exist.

NOTE.—This is the first section of a three-part series under this heading.

"Cremation," according to the teachings of Theosophy, *"was universal* till a comparatively recent period." (*S.D.* II, 753.) This explains, says the occult tradition, why paleontologists have been unable to find, along with the gigantic remains of the plesiosauri and mastodons, the skeletons of *human* giants, which both the Bible and *The Secret Doctrine* say existed in the early days of our race. "There were giants in the earth in those days." (Gen. 6:4.) "Man's size," states *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 753), "was reduced from 15 to 10 or 12 feet, ever since the third sub-race of the Aryan stock, which sub-race—born and developed in Europe and Asia Minor under new climates and conditions—had become European. Since then, as said, it has steadily been decreasing." But whether the human frame was once of giant proportions or not, the antiquity of cremation, as a method of disposal of the dead, is generally admitted. Thus, in the *Encyclopedia Britannica,* under "Cremation," we read:

> Cremation, the burning of human corpses . . . was the general practice of the ancient world, with the important exceptions of Egypt, where bodies were embalmed, Judea, where they were buried in sepulchres, and China, where they were buried in the earth. . . . There can be little doubt that the practice of cremation in modern Europe was at first stopped, and thereafter prevented in great measure, by the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body; partly also by the notion that the Christian's body was redeemed and purified.

The chief obstacle to ready acceptance of cremation once largely stood, as intimated, in the misunderstood doctrine of resurrection, the belief held by many Christian sects today that millions, or perhaps billions, of decayed corpses will one day, in some miraculous manner, be revitalized—and thus raised *materially* into the clouds and on through the gates of heaven. It is the opinion of the Theosophist that this doctrine is illogical, unscientific, and materialistic in the extreme; that it is unsupportable by Scripture, and ought therefore to be re-examined. Let us take a new look, then, at those statements in the Bible which have been thought to support the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh.

To make a study of this kind, however, it is essential that the reader first be made acquainted with, or at least reminded of, the age-old doctrine of the sevenfold nature of man, which is implicit in Buddhist, Hindu and Zoroastrian scriptures, and even hinted at in the New Testament. The present-day teachings of Theosophy, which are based upon the ancient *Book of Dzyan* (sometimes *Zion*),

that primeval Source from which all great religious scriptures are derived, affirms this doctrine, and says that the Immortal Ego in man is a trinity, called in Sanskrit *Atma-Buddhi-Manas,* or Spirit, Soul, and Mind. This Divine Triad, *which is the real Man,* incarnates periodically into an instrument, or vehicle, of four constituent parts —the Sanskrit names of which are *Rupa,* the physical body; *Linga Sarira,* the astral or starry body, the magnetic model or matrix into which the physical atoms arrange themselves; *Prana,* the life principle, manifesting as breath; and *Kama Rupa,* passions and desires. These four lower constituents make up the perishable vehicle, or personality, which lasts but for one lifetime. The Higher Triad, on the other hand, having no beginning will have no end. It is birthless and deathless—therefore eternal.

St. Paul (1 Thes. 5:23) speaks of man as being comprised of body, soul and spirit. This threefold division, states *The Secret Doctrine,* is perfectly correct, adding that in it is contained, in fact, the seven principles mentioned above—in much the same way as the three primary colors of the spectrum—red, yellow, and blue—contain all seven. And in answer to the questions on resurrection, "How are the dead raised up?" and "With what body do they come?" Paul himself goes beyond the threefold division:

> There are bodies celestial, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.
>
> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. (1 Cor. 15: 35-42.)

What is the apostle saying here unless it be that man possesses several kinds of bodies, or "glories"—one terrestrial and earthy, which must die—others, celestial, which are of the nature of sun, moon and stars? This is exactly the Theosophical teaching: that man's seven constituents are in perfect correspondence with the Seven Sacred Planets of the solar system—the sun and moon always being considered by ancient astrologers as planets. Herein, indeed, lies the basis for true astrology—only remnants of which, unfortunately, exist in our day, too often serving but to confound those who attempt to guide their lives by the stars. Bible students may find it suggestive to reread chapter 15 of First Corinthians with the sevenfold classification of man in mind, and to compare what is said with similar Hindu, Zoroastrian, and Buddhist teachings, or with chap-

ters 4 through 7 of *The Ocean of Theosophy,* by Wm. Q. Judge.

One of the difficulties experienced by Bible students in obtaining a philosophical grasp of the meaning of resurrection, thus becoming able to accept the idea of cremation, lies undoubtedly in the fact that when the term "body" is used, it is almost always taken to mean the *physical* body. We are inclined to forget St. Paul's teaching that man possesses other vestures. One of these, he says, is composed of the same substance as the Sun—and this body, according to Theosophy, endures for a whole *manvantara,* or period of evolution. Another body in Paul's classification is said to be made of lunar material. This is referred to by the mediæval Kabalists as the "astral body," which survives the physical for a short time after death, and which occasionally appears as the "ghost" of the man that was. Still other bodies mentioned in the New Testament correspond to the stars.

It is almost impossible, no doubt, for the Saviors and prophets of mankind to convey to the materialistic mind of this or any age the nature of life on other planes, or the structure of the bodies used in those higher worlds. Who except those initiated into the Mysteries can understand what it was the disciples saw when Moses and Elias, who had been dead for centuries, "appeared in glory" as Jesus prayed on the mountain? (Luke 9:30-31.) Where is the modern Christian who can explain the type of vesture used by the angel who came in through prison walls to free Peter from his cell? (Acts 12:7.) Or that of the angel who came to Manoah and his wife (Judges 13), appearing in all respects like unto a man, but who, "when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar . . . ascended in the flame?" And who, among average church-goers, or even among the most learned of present-day theologians, has the slightest conception of the nature and quality of Jesus' body, either before or after the crucifixion?

The description of the after-death states of the Ego, as given in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (pp. 110-111), reveals the extreme difficulty experienced by religious founders of putting into words the things of Spirit, and of explaining, *in our terms,* the nature of metaphysical bodies. Mr. Judge writes:

> Now the Ego being minus mortal body and *kama* [desire], clothes itself in *devachan* [heaven] with a vesture which cannot be called body but may be styled means or vehicle, and in that it functions in the devachanic state entirely on the plane of mind

and soul. Everything is as real then to the being as this world seems to be to us.

And did not Jesus meet with a related problem, as shown in His answer to the Sadducees who, thinking in terms of the physical body, asked which of the seven men who had the same wife during life would claim her in heaven?

> Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.
>
> And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. (Matt. 22:25-30.)

What is meant in Jesus' reply to the Sadducees if not that, in the resurrection or in the after-death condition of the soul, we do not function as human beings with physical bodies, but rather "as the angels," whose bodies are shown in the Bible to be non-physical, and subject neither to time nor space? If no other evidence were available, the answer here given by Jesus is enough to dispel forever the false notion of bodily resurrection.

(*To be continued*)

NOTE.—The following article, largely excerpted from Col. H. S. Olcott's account of the first cremation in the United States, provides the student with historical background not previously printed in THEOSOPHY—Eds.

THE CREMATION OF BARON DE PALM

CREMATION as a way and means of disposing of the physical bodies of the deceased is a practice well known to almost every person in the United States. Few of our citizens are acquainted, however, with the history of the practice in this country and of the part played by the Theosophical Movement in bringing into existence a reform which was bitterly opposed in the seventies of last century.

The first crematory to be erected in the United States was built by Dr. F. Julius Le Moyne at Washington, Pennsylvania, in the year 1876. The first person to be cremated there was a Theosophist by the name of Baron de Palm, an early member of the Theosophical Society who, upon the advice of the Founders of the Movement, stipulated that his remains be disposed of in this manner. Colonel H. S. Olcott, the first President of the Theosophical Society, was one of the executors of Baron de Palm's will, and upon him rested the responsibility, not only of carrying out the last wishes of the deceased, but of instituting in the Western world a sorely needed reform in the religious rites and obsequies of the dead. Although Theosophists seek no honor or personal recognition for the good they may have done—yet to Col. Olcott belongs the credit, more perhaps than to any other, for progress toward a practice both more ancient and "civilized" than burial. For even though the inspiration for a reform of such magnitude was implicit in the universal perspective of H. P. Blavatsky, it was Col. Olcott who guided events and worked out details, including a well-planned scheme for wide publicity, and who even sacrificed at the altar of Christian prejudice a personal business connection that cost him several thousands of dollars a year.

In Old Diary Leaves (Vol. I) Col. Olcott gives background and details of the de Palm cremation. The following excerpts are from Chapters X and XI:

"Joseph Henry Louis Charles, Baron de Palm, Grand Cross Commander of the Order of the Holy Sepulchre and Knight of various other orders, was born at Augsburg, May 10, 1809, in an ancient

baronial family of Bavaria. Late in life he emigrated to America . . . [and] joined our Society, and, a vacancy occurring soon after the resignation of the Rev. J. H. Wiggin, he was elected a Member of the Council. As he complained of feeble health, I invited him to come and occupy a room in my 'apartment,' and called in a physician to prescribe for him. Symptoms of pneumonia and nephritis showing themselves and the medical attendant pronouncing him in danger, he was removed to the Roosevelt Hospital on Friday evening, May 19th, 1876, and died the next morning.

"He particularly asked that no clergyman or priest officiate at his funeral, but that I should perform the last offices in a fashion that would illustrate the Eastern notions of death and immortality. Meanwhile H.P.B. and the rest of us bestirred ourselves to organize an impressive "Pagan funeral"—as the press chose to call it. Through the obliging courtesy of the Rev. O. B. Frothingham, whose congregation were worshipping in the great hall of the Masonic Temple, at the corner of Twenty-third Street and Sixth Avenue, New York City, we were enabled to hold the Baron's obsequies in that vast apartment. An hour before the appointed time the street was crowded by an eager, even somewhat obstreperous multitude, and a strong body of police had to be sent for to prevent the doors being forced. The great hall, which holds 2000 people, was crowded in every corner, the vast passages and lobbies were blocked, and from the buzz of conversation and uneasiness prevailing it was easy to see that the multitude had come to gratify its curiosity, certainly not to evince either respect for the dead or sympathy with the Theosophical Society. Through the whole of the previous week the leading papers had been lashing public curiosity into a frenzy. With this sort of thing going on for days together in advance, it may be imagined in what sort of dangerous mood was the crowded audience, only a handful of whom were members of the T.S. and most of whom were positively prejudiced against it.

"The Council of the T.S., at its meeting of June 14th, and the Society, in its session of 21st June (1876), passed Resolutions ratifying and confirming all that the officers had done in connection with the de Palm autopsy, obsequies, and embalming. A Resolution was also adopted to the effect that—

> The President and Treasurer of this Society, who are the executors under the last will and testament of our late fellow be, and hereby are, authorized and empowered to do in the name

of this Society any and all further acts, which they may deem necessary to complete the disposal of the remains of our late fellow, according to his expressed wishes and direction.

"Both Dr. Le Moyne and I being strong advocates for cremation, we were fully convinced that the public interest demanded the giving of wide publicity to this event and the invitation of men of science and officers of Boards of Health, to be present and carefully scrutinize the process of reduction of the body by fire. In pursuance of the policy of bold publicity, Mr. Newton and I, as executors, and Dr. Le Moyne, as owner of the crematory, addressed the following invitation to Boards of Health, individual scientists, selected principals and professors of colleges, clergymen and editors:

New York, November, 1876.

Dear Sir: Upon the 6th of December, proximo, at Washington, Pa., will be cremated the body of the late JOSEPH HENRY LOUIS, BARON DE PALM, Grand Cross Commander of the Sovereign Order of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem; Knight of St. John of Malta; Prince of the Roman Empire; late Chamberlain to His Majesty the King of Bavaria; Fellow of the Theosophical Society, etc., etc., in compliance with wishes expressed to his executors shortly before his decease. This ceremony you are respectfully invited, either in person or by proxy, to attend. The occasion being one of interest to science, in its historical, sanitary, and other aspects, the Executors of Baron de Palm have consented that it shall have publicity. This invitation is accordingly sent you in the hope that you many find it convenient to be represented and, in case the general subject of cremation should be discussed, take part in the debate. The University of Pennsylvania, the Washington and Jefferson College, the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons, other institutions of learning, and the Health Boards of Boston, Philadelphia, Washington (D.C.) and other cities, have already signified their intention to send representatives. It is believed that the occasion will draw together a very large number of highly competent and influential scientific observers.

"The acceptances were numerous, the public interest being so thoroughly aroused that, as a gentlemen who had access to the exchanges of an influential journal, declares, 'there is not a journal printed in the United States but has had more or less to say, not only about the Baron's burning, but also about his theosophical religious views.' Our invitation to scientists and sanitary boards was accepted in many cases. . . .

"And thus it came about that the Theosophical Society not only

introduced Hindu philosophical ideas into the United States, but also the Hindu mode of sepulchre. Since that first scientific cremation in America, many others, of men, women, and children, have occurred, other crematoriums have been built, and cremation societies have been originated in my country. British prejudice has been so far overcome that Parliament has legalised cremation, a society has been chartered, and it was in its crematorium at Woking, near London, that the body of H.P.B. was burnt, agreeably to her verbal and written request."

According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica,* "There were [in 1948] 193 crematoria established in the United States of America and Canada where, for the quinquennial period 1944 to 1948 there were 264,002 cremations recorded." Although more recent statistics on cremation are not readily available in the United States, the following account of the practice in Great Britain, as contained in the volume *The Law of Burial, Cremation and Exhumation,* by M. R. R. Davies, published in 1956 by Shaw and Sons, Ltd., of London, indicates its rapid rise throughout the Western world: "Since the first crematorium was opened at Woking in 1885, no less than 1,149,507 cremations had been carried out in Great Britain by the end of 1954. In 1954 there were 563,128 deaths in Great Britain, 125,521 (or 22.26%) of which were cremated. This compares with 1.6% in 1934, and 7.8% in 1945. In 1934 there were 28 crematoria in the country, while in 1954 there were 74." Furthermore, Mr. Davies suggests:

> As regards the future, it may well be that the number of cremations will increase at an even more rapid rate, since more local authorities are being encouraged to establish crematoria in view of the growing demand for cremation services and the need to economise in the use of urban land. (No less than 500 acres of land are normally required each year for burial purposes in Great Britain). The cost of cremation is relatively inexpensive since there is no grave to buy and no tombstone to provide and maintain. Although ignorance and lack of facilities hindered the development of cremation for many years, increasing public enlightenment and available facilities now make it difficult to foresee any real limit to the future growth of the practice in this country. (*Op. cit.,* pp. 158-60.)

YOUTH FORUM

A common idea today is that our life should be composed of work which is pleasant, and that we should be "happy" in whatever we do. In a world strained with discord and pain, what right do we have to desire to be happy?

The first impulse, when commenting on this question, is to compare the idea of pleasure or the "pursuit of happiness" with the view that only a stern reliance on individual self-awareness makes life worth while. But it must be recognized that these ideals are rooted in a philosophy which preceded Epicurus and reached into the late nineteenth century through John Stuart Mill. It will certainly be helpful in framing our use of terms to illustrate some of these conceptions of pleasure. If we take Mill's creed, which "accepts as the foundation of morals, Utility or the Greatest Happiness Principle," and which "holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness," then just about all popular and social sentiments regarding the "Good Life" are given a philosophical basis.

In order to see how an entire culture becomes attached to the goal of hedonism, we have merely to apply Mill's Utilitarianism. For example, a man can find, in cooperation with other men, efficient means to relieve the pains of hunger, housing and health. Then, as these ends are met, they easily become standards of human achievement. Men then need have no fear of where they stand in relation to one another. The signs of wealth and comfort, offer immediate proof that this is the right way to live. Certainly pain is a factor in this formula—but only as something to be eliminated. However, when we have finally achieved this ideal and the pains of deprivation are relieved, a larger problem presents itself. We have either to vegetate in the "Good Life" or to conceive new goals, which means saying something else about what human beings are potentially capable of. As a culture, we have not been able to do this.

While Mill stressed the social good in pleasure, Oscar Wilde later made Dorian Gray a spokesman for the justification of personal

enjoyment. Passing over the grossest forms of sensual indulgence, Wilde speaks of the refinements of a "new Hedonism":

> It appeared to Dorian Gray that the true nature of the senses had never been understood, and that they had remained savage and animal merely because the world had sought to starve them into submission or to kill them by pain, instead of aiming at making them elements of a new spirituality, of which a fine instinct for beauty was to be the dominant characteristic.
>
> [This hedonism] . . . was to have its service of the intellect, certainly; yet, it was never to accept any theory or system that would involve the sacrifice of any mode of passionate experience. Its aim, indeed, was to be experience itself, and not the fruits of experience, sweet or bitter as they might be.

It might be added that there are other, more familiar moments which represent climactic human fulfillment—for example, when we have a sense of deep relationship and personal identity with others or with Nature. We may remember walking on the beach or in the mountains with a dear friend, when a sense of almost limitless existence seems to fill the moment. The wind, ocean, sand, and sun are fused into a whole which is felt as part of one's larger self—two natures mingling in a singular experience. There need be no concern if others call it romantic, illusionary, or madness, because the reality is absolute during that moment. Such experience is an aspect of our personal, yet universal feelings. They give immediate pleasure, yet transcend the physical in their breadth; we experience much more than what our senses tell us. Yet behind this oneness with life lurks the knowledge that it too will pass and be replaced by doubts, and other longings. Time and physical conditions conclude that brief vision as effortlessly as the ocean melts sand-castles. Yet somehow those doubts and longings are both our tragedy and our salvation.

There would be no reason to strive after anything if we now lived continually in that "limitless existence." Merging with the ONE, even if possible, is incompatible with the ideal of persistent searching, questioning, and the occasional thrill of discovering meaning or purpose in life. This (almost) cosmic "pleasure" would exclude too many of the unavoidable realities of life; it leaves too many questions unanswered. So, instead of answering our original question—"What right do we have to desire to be happy?"—we can ask another question as a young woman did recently: "What right have I to write rhapsodic poetry when innocent people are dying in Vietnam."

A *Britannica* article on Epicurus' philosophy gives the "natural" reason why men put such faith in the more personal aspects of pleasure:

> It was necessary, therefore, for Epicurus to go back to nature to find a more enduring and a wider foundation for ethical doctrine, to go back from words to realities, to give up reasonings and get at feelings, to test conceptions and arguments by a final reference to the only touchstone of truth—to sensation. There, and there only, one seems to find a common and a satisfactory ground, supposing always that all men's feelings give the same answer.

Returning to our original question, we could say that the desire for pleasure or happiness has deep personal and cultural roots; that it has been the reason for both the greatest good and the greatest evil in the relationships between men; and that this desire does not exclude the "discord and pain" in the world. Perhaps the broadest explanation for the "right to desire to be happy" is contained in H. P. Blavatsky's definition of "Kamadeva" (*Glossary*):

> As the *Eros* of Hesiod, degraded into Cupid by exoteric law, and still more degraded by a later popular sense attributed to the term, so is Kama a most mysterious and metaphysical subject. Kama is the first conscious, *all embracing desire* for universal good, love, and for all that lives and feels, needs help and kindness, the first feeling of infinite tender compassion and mercy that arose in the consciousness of the creative ONE FORCE, as soon as it came into life and being as a ray from the ABSOLUTE. There is no idea of sexual love in the conception. Kama is pre-eminently the divine desire of creating happiness and love; and it is only ages later, as mankind began to materialize by anthropomorphization its grandest ideals into cut and dried dogmas, that Kama became the power that gratifies desire on the animal plane.

Anyone who has wanted to do good, to love, to help—let alone one who has had a feeling of "all embracing desire"—participates in the desire for pleasure and happiness, and also in a world "strained with discord and pain."

on the lookout

Men of Conscience; Men of Fear

A two-part article in the *Progressive* (July, August), titled "The Far Right and the Churches," presents a view of the "ferment" in contemporary Christianity. The authors, Howard and Arlene Eisenberg, interviewed a substantial number of clergymen who are courageously resisting current pressure from extremist groups who demand identification of Christianity with "anti-communism." The Eisenbergs quote from typically derogatory letters received by the National Council of Churches to show the extent of attempts to intimidate the Protestant clergy. These letters accuse the NCC, a highly respectable body, of being "Communist dominated." So threatening were many of these letters that countering statements have been issued—as that from the national headquarters of the United Presbyterian churches—calling for alert congregations to support all pastors who speak, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, for an affirmative ethic rather than an attitude of denunciation of "enemies." This communication summarizes the tactics used by "hate-fear" extremists:

> With pseudo-evangelistic fervor and misguided zeal, some church members seek to convert Christians not to a firmer allegiance to Jesus Christ, but to a campaign of anti-Communism. . . . There are congregations which are being rent asunder. Their peace and unity have been disrupted, their central mission has been deferred, their reason for being has been lost sight of, as church member is set against church member and church officer against church officer. Some ministers . . . are tragically resigning their pastorates or compromising their convictions. Others are being advised, or ordered not to speak on social and political issues. Pressure is brought to bear. Threats and intimidations become the order of the day when certain church members say: "We will leave the church unless . . ." "Our contributions will cease until . . ." "You'd better stop preaching about . . ."

The above letter, significantly, was written three years ago, and a cross-country inquiry directed to major denominations by the

Progressive authors makes it clear that such "ugly situations" are increasing.

Long Drawn Out Struggle

The Eisenbergs suggest this explanation:

> Why should so many ministers across the country—such as the score or more in the Chicago area currently under attack by strongly entrenched Bircher minorities—now be assailed more bitterly than ever? An important reason appears to be the growing tendency in the past few years of clergymen—Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish—to become involved in social issues, thereby bearing witness to man's responsibility toward his fellow man.
>
> Some Catholic and Jewish clerics have been chastised for such activities. Catholic civil rights spokesmen in the Los Angeles diocese were silenced by their leadership, and rabbis involved in interfaith work were denounced by extreme conservatives of their own faith. But it is the Protestants who have been hit hardest and heaviest. Their ever-intensifying emphasis on a social gospel which brings not only Sunday but every day of the week and every significant aspect of community life within the minister's purview collides head-on with long-established belief among many fundamentalists that man is "saved" only through acceptance of Jesus Christ, and the saving of souls is, or should be, the only concern of the Church.

Provincial vs. Universal Christianity

A lucidly-written contribution in *Contemporary Moral Issues* (Wadsworth, 1964) describes the background of the current struggle between dogmatic provincialism and the belief of Christians of conscience that their duty is to alleviate hate and fear, rather than foment and manipulate these emotions. The outspoken theologian, Karl Barth, is quoted to make the position of the liberal Christian clear:

> The East-West question has accompanied and shadowed us all since the end of World War II. On this question I cannot agree with the great Eastern communism, in view of the face it presents to the world. I decidedly prefer not to live within its sphere and do not wish anyone else to be forced to do so. But I do not comprehend how either politics or Christianity require or even permit such a disinclination to lead to the conclusions which the West has drawn with increasing sharpness in the past 15 years. I regard anticommunism as a matter of principle an evil even greater than communism itself. Can one overlook the fact that communism is the unwelcomed yet—in all its belligerence—

natural result of Western developments? Has not its total, inhuman compulsion which we complain of so much haunted from remotest times in another form our avowedly free Western societies and states? Further, could we really intend to help the peoples governed by communism and the world threatened by it, or even one individual among those suffering under its effects, by proclaiming and seeking to practice toward it a relationship exclusively that of enemies? Have we forgotten that what is at stake in this "absolute enemy" relationship, to which every brave man in the West is now obligated and for which he would give his all, is a typical invention of (and a heritage from) our defunct dictators—and that only the "Hitler in us" can be an anti-communist on principle?

Typical Incidents

The Eisenbergs cite numerous occasions calling for ministers to take a stand on principle under conditions so threatening that their positions are in jeopardy—occasionally, though not often, because of pressure from superiors in their own hierarchy:

A California minister was hit by a mass walk-out of some 200 church members out of a total of 800 when he came out against Proposition 14—the anti-fair housing referendum—during the 1964 election. Right-wing members drew up a long array of charges against him, including financial undermining of the church. Two-thirds of his board voted to ask for his removal. But his bishop, aware that he was made a target because of his outstanding record in the civil liberties-civil rights area, knew the indictment was riddled with prejudice. He refused to dismiss the minister.

Clergymen are learning to listen for rumblings from the right and are developing defenses against assaults by extremists. "My own community is somewhat of a hotbed of John Birch activity," a Texas pastor told us in a comfortable twang. "I made no secret of my position on race relations and ecumenism, and it caused some very active members—including deacons—to join other churches. We lost twenty-five to thirty members and that many more became inactive."

Outstanding Voice of Clarity

Dr. Franklin H. Littell, professor of church history at the Chicago Theological Seminary, and a member of the General Board of the Methodist Church, has become a chief target for attacks from the hate groups because he insists on an obvious truth—that extremism is the speediest road to totalitarianism. Dr. Littell became aware of the dangerous potential of extremist organizations during

ten years of service with the U.S. military government in Germany. "Churches and universities," Dr. Littell writes, "must provide the public with responsible analysis of the threats posed by Communism and Fascism. Otherwise ordinary folk, who are rightfully concerned about the 'danger on the left' are left to the mercies of witch doctors like Welch, Hargis, and the others—people who wouldn't know a Communist from a dinosaur."

The Eisenbergs conclude:

> Who are these men who have linked anti-Communism with the most primitive forms of fundamentalist religion and turned the combination into corporate enterprises? And what kinds of people dance to the tune of their timbrel and lyre?
>
> A psychiatrist sums up the beliefs, including the religious concepts, of the whole right-wing movement as a kind of "patriotic paranoia"—which may or may not be why so many right-wingers view mental health programs with alarm. In a recent special supplement on the far right published by *The Reformed Journal,* a monthly read by ministers and laymen in Reformed and Presbyterian churches, J. Marion Snapper, associate professor of Education at Calvin College, describes extremism as "a style of life." In Snapper's view, extremists see the world as "a hostile, threatening place. People are not to be trusted. . . . Human relations are based on aggressiveness, discipline, respect. Love, trust, and tenderness are little understood. History is a black and white affair. Suspended judgment is bad. . . ."

"Reactionaries" and the Theosophical Movement

Assuming, as it seems we must, that these harassed ministers are taking a firm stand on the ethical principles expounded by Jesus and are evincing a firm belief in the essential Brotherhood of Man, the warning given by H.P.B. in her Fourth Message to American Theosophists seems equally applicable to that segment of the truly "Christian" community that is endangered by such tactics as the Eisenbergs recount. H.P.B. speaks forcefully:

> The period which we have now reached in the cycle that will close between 1897-98 is, and will continue to be, one of great conflict and continued strain. . . . The critical nature of the stage on which we have entered is as well known to the forces that fight against us as to those that fight on our side. No opportunity will be lost of sowing dissension, of taking advantage of mistaken and false moves, of instilling doubt, so that by any and every means the unity of the Society may be broken and the ranks of our Fellows thinned and thrown into disarray. . . . Believe me that . . . owing to the inherent imperfections of Human Nature,

advantage is often taken by our ever-watchful enemies of your noblest qualities to betray and to mislead you.

"The Corruption of Innocent Neutrons"

This title, which heads an article by W. H. Auden, poet and essayist, in the New York *Times* weekly magazine for Aug.1, is to be taken literally! Mr. Auden writes: "As a symbol . . . the existence of nuclear weapons is of great significance. . . . Today in the technologically advanced countries—and it is only a matter of time before it will be the case everywhere—we have little to fear from nature; our only serious problem is man, who can now do, or get nature to do for him, what he is not yet capable of understanding." The author quotes Werner Heisenberg:

> It would not be too crude an oversimplification to say that *for the first time in the course of history modern man on this earth now confronts himself alone,* and that he no longer has partners or opponents. . . . When we speak of the picture of nature in the exact science of our age, we do not mean a picture of nature so much as a *picture of our relationships with nature.* . . .
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> Science no longer confronts nature as an objective observer, but sees itself as an actor in the interplay between man and nature. The scientific method of analyzing, explaining and classifying has become conscious of its limitations, which arise out of the fact that by its intervention science alters and refashions the object of investigation. In other words, method and object can no longer be separated. The scientific world-view has ceased to be a scientific view in the true sense of the word.

A True Ethical Imperative

Mr. Auden asks: "What conclusions, then, may we draw from knowing that our power to do evil is now virtually unlimited, and that we no longer have any partners or opponents other than ourselves?" His opinion comes very close to the view of morality and the law of Karma found in Theosophy. He continues:

> If we think of Ethics as a set of imposed rules, then it is obvious that man can break them with absolute impunity. If the word Ethics has any meaning, then we must agree with Wittgenstein, "Ethics does not treat of the world. Ethics must be a condition of the world, like logic." The laws of ethics, that is to say, must be like the laws of physics and chemistry, laws we can, out of ignorance or willfulness, defy but cannot break, any more than I can break the laws of biochemistry by getting drunk or the law of gravity by jumping out of the window, and the consequence of defying them must be as inevitable and as intrinsically linked to their natures as a hangover or a broken leg. To state moral

laws in the imperative is simply a matter of pedagogical technique, just as a mother says to her child, "Stay away from that window!" because the child is as yet ignorant of what will happen if it falls out of it.

Universal Responsibility

The ideas in the concluding portion of Mr. Auden's essay recall the theosophical teaching that "Nature unaided fails." Man is the responsible agent in nature; all of nature, including the atomic world, is a living reflector of the thoughts and acts of man. As Mr. Auden puts it:

> If nothing in the universe is responsible for us, then we are responsible for everything in the universe. Just as in the Book of Genesis Adam was made responsible for dressing and tilling the Garden of Eden. . . . Much has been written, for example, about the effects of ruthless exploitation of nature, thoughtless disturbances of her ecology, indiscriminate use of antibiotics, etc., but we are still loath to change our ways. The time has come when we must choose to treat nature not as a slave but as a partner, or more accurately, perhaps, as a loving father treats his children. We have first to admit that every created thing has as much right to its kind of existence as we have to ours, and then go on to ask what, with our help, it could become but cannot by its own unaided efforts.
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> The model for our right relation to nature should be that of the good trainer of animals. It seems obvious to me, for instance, that a well-trained sheepdog has more realized its "dog nature" than a wild one, just as a spoiled lapdog or one terrified by ill usage has had its "dogginess" debased. This means, of course, reintroducing the notion of teleology, for a long time now a dirty word with scientists, but they will get over the shock. Our world will be a safer and healthier place when we can admit that every time we make an atomic bomb we corrupt the morals of a host of innocent neutrons below the age of consent.

"Teleology," we may note, has some significant definitions. According to the *American College Dictionary,* it is: "1. the doctrine of final causes or purposes. 2. the study of the evidences of design or purpose in nature. 3. the belief that purpose and design are a part of nature. 4. the doctrine in vitalism that phenomena are guided not only by mechanical forces but that they also move toward certain actualities."

Death and Birth of Universes

Considerable current discussion of the theory that universes originate with "cataclysmic explosions" is gathered in feature arti-

cles in the New York *Times* and in magazines. For example, a comment in the *New Yorker* for July 17 reveals that leading astronomers who favor this hypothesis are not now thinking of original explosions as purely accidental bursts of energy, but rather as phases in endlessly repeated cycles of "death and rebirth on a cosmic scale." The *New Yorker* states:

> According to a report from the Mount Wilson and Palomar Observatories, in California, scientists are coming around to the view that the universe has a heartbeat. This theory is backed by the discovery of "quasi-stellar galaxies," which are deemed to be teenage versions of the recently observed quasars, both the blue galaxies and the quasars apparently being stages in the quasi-mortal development of a normal galaxy, such as our own mature Milky Way. According to the report, the cosmos expands and contracts much as a heart does, pumping once every eighty-two billion years, and destroying and bringing to life a succession of universes with each lub-dup, or "big bang."
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> We congratulate science on finally beginning to discover its true identity, as an agency for corroborating ancient wisdom. Long before our century, before the Christian era, and even before Homer, the people of India had arrived at a "big-bang" cosmogony, just as they had thought up, long before anyone else, the zero and the algebraic x—inventions that took some years and the mediation of the Arabs to carry over to the primitive West, with the result that most Westerners still think that the zero and the x are in fact Arabic contributions.

Current Cosmic Theories

The science editor for the New York *Times,* Walter Sullivan, in presenting current theories on the origin of the universe (Sunday features for May 23 and June 13), begins the first article by asking:

> Did the universe begin with a cataclysmic explosion and, if so, will it meet an equally violent end? Is it changeless, eternal and infinite, or is it enclosed within itself and pulsating? . . . Since the 1920's, it has been known that [the] distant galaxies are all flying away from us. The farther from us they are, the faster they are receding. The problem is: why? Three basic cosmologies, or conceptions of the universe, have been advanced to explain this motion.
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> (1) The "big bang" theory accounts for the outward motion in terms of an explosion some 10 to 15 billion years ago. The explosion threw out hydrogen that condensed into galaxies of stars that began manufacturing heavier elements. Most protagonists of this theory do not seek to explain the origin of the material spewed forth in the explosion itself, which is considered more a religious question.

(2) The "steady state" theory seeks to avoid the problems of a universe with a definite beginning by saying that the universe always was as it is today. It expands into infinite space and new matter is formed to fill the gaps between the spreading galaxies.

(3) The "oscillation theory" describes a universe in which no creation of matter is required, either at the beginning, as in the big-bang theory, or continuously, as in the steady-state theory. The universe expands, as the consequence of an explosion, then contracts until the galaxies fall together, setting off a new explosion. This cycle continues forever.

"The Geometry of the Universe"

While the *New Yorker* mentions the "Big-Bang Theory," it really refers to theory (3) above, which includes (1), but eliminates the awkward concepts of a one-time universe and of a first creation of matter, presumably by some extra-cosmic Creator. Mr. Sullivan goes on to say:

> The geometry of space is the key. It is generally agreed that, over distances measured in millions or billions of light years, space is curved. The nature of that curvature would indicate whether or not the universe is closed in upon itself and probably oscillating, or is "open" and expanding into infinite space. . . . Because [the newly discovered] quasars, for some mysterious reason, emit vast amounts of energy in radio and light waves, they can be seen at much greater distances than any other objects and hence they should make it possible to explore the geometry of the universe. . . . The quasars have been detected so far away that their light has taken many billions of years to reach the earth. Thus they are seen as they were soon after the hypothetical explosion. In viewing them, we are looking deep into the history of the universe.

Implications of Recent Theories

The latest discovery of brilliant blue galaxies ("a major new constituent of the universe [which] opens a giant door on the heavens") implies, according to Dr. Allan Sandage of Mount Palomar Observatory, that the oscillation theory may be the true one. Mr. Sullivan remarks in his June 13 article:

> Not only do these discoveries have great philosophical and scientific implications; it is hard to see how they can fail to influence the creative currents of our time.
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> The realization, during the Renaissance, that the earth is not central to the cosmos deeply affected the creative geniuses of that time. If Dr. Sandage's preliminary interpretation of the data is correct, then it is established that the universe is ulti-

mately bound to collapse upon itself, this too will have enormous implications. . . .

> Such stars as our sun have a life span of about 10 billion years, our own being in middle age. As such stars grow old they suddenly expand, vaporizing any nearby planets. Thus it has been known for some time that the solar system is doomed. As the British mathematician and philosopher, Bertrand Russell, has put it: "All the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system."
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> It has been argued that, while each inhabited world of the universe is thus mortal, such civilizations may be able to communicate with one another, passing on to young worlds the histories, achievements and wisdom of aging ones.

Theosophical Purview

Theosophists suggest that if one ponders on the fact that Hindus knew so many millenniums ago about the rebirth of the universe, it is reasonable to respect the complementary logic of an endless reincarnation of souls. And "souls" may be both the energizing forces behind the periodic expansion and contraction of the cosmos, and the focus for continuity of the experience these worlds have to offer. As the *Gita* states (Chap. 8):

> All worlds up to that of Brahman are subject to rebirth again and again. . . . Those who are acquainted with day and night know that the day of Brahmâ is a thousand revolutions of the yugas and that his night extendeth for a thousand more. At the coming on of that day all things issue forth from the unmanifested into manifestation, so on the approach of that night they merge again into the unmanifested. . . . But there is that which upon the dissolution of all things else is not destroyed; it is indivisible, indestructible, and of another nature from the visible.

The theosophical student may puzzle over Mr. Sullivan's statement linking "pulsation" and a "closed universe," for must there not be infinite expansion? Madame Blavatsky indicates that there are two kinds of space: the Absolute Space of the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* (which is indeed infinite and of unlimited potentialities), and "finite space," the space of the physical, manifested universe. All material manifestations must in some sense be "closed systems." Furthermore, *The Secret Doctrine* frequently mentions various kinds of pralaya, obscuration or rest periods. There are the smaller pralayas when an earth or a solar system is dissolved; and there are larger ones that encompass the enormous

galaxies composed of multitudes of solar systems. But there is also the Universal or Cosmic pralaya, which supervenes when the entire manifested Universe ceases to be. This would appear to correspond to the tremendous cycle of which the foregoing articles speak, although the figure of 82 billion years would be a small fraction of the time-span mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*.

Other Worlds Inhabited?

Mr. Sullivan, an ardent exponent of the theory that other worlds are inhabited, has indicated the possibility of communication between worlds as a means of passing on wisdom when one system dies; and his recent work *We Are Not Alone* (McGraw-Hill, 1964) presents some available evidence. However, he notes in his July 30 article in the *Times*:

> A heavy, perhaps fatal, blow was delivered today to the possibility that there is or once was life on Mars. The Mariner 4 photographs taken of the planet at close range July 14 show a crater-pocked landscape lacking any sign that there has been water erosion there. There is no evidence of river valleys or ocean basins. Virtually all theories for the origin of life demand the presence of liquid water, preferably in large quantities. While Mars has frosty caps on its poles, it now appears that the planet may never have known rain. . . .
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> [However] the results do not bear directly on the possibility of life in other planetary systems, a possibility many consider high. [And] despite the dim prospects of life on Mars, the Mariner 4 pictures do not directly rule it out. They cover only about 1 per cent of the surface. They show features no less than two or more miles in width. Above all they do not explain the seasonal color changes that have long been cited as the chief evidence for life.
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> Every spring, areas near the winter pole of Mars begin to darken and this effect moves slowly toward the equator. It is as though some form of vegetation was coming to life, although the direction of this progression—toward the equator—is the reverse of the advance of spring on earth. Various proposals have been made as to how such darkening could occur by nonliving processes, but none of them has been widely accepted.

The Secret Doctrine (I, 165) states: "Mars is in a state of obscuration at present, and Mercury just beginning to get out of it. . . . Venus is in her last Round." For a planet to be in obscuration would mean that the inhabitants are active on the invisible planes of that sphere, the physical globe being in a state of rest.